

I. In The Claims

Please amend the affected claims as set forth below. *Inter alia*, the following amendments include broadening changes to claim 17, and specifically the substitution of the term “linkage” for the narrower “pull member,” as well as the substitution of the terms “fully opened” and “fully closed” for the previous terms “unclamped” and “fully clamped.” The amendments further include proposed new claims 22-31, which claims recite the subject invention more broadly than presently-canceled claims 13-16.

Claims 13-16 (Canceled). Please cancel pending claims 13-16.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended). A hand-held device for gripping objects positioned beyond arm’s length, comprising:

a first pair of jaws movable relative to each other between an unclamped position and a fully clamped position;

a handle spaced apart from said pair of jaws by a central portion, said handle including a trigger connected to said pair of jaws by a linkage ~~pull member~~, whereby actuation of said trigger is operative to selectively position said pair of jaws between the ~~unclamped~~ fully opened and fully ~~clamped~~ closed positions thereof; and

wherein each of the pair of jaws includes a gripping portion freely removably connected thereto.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented). The hand-held device of claim 17, wherein each of the pair of jaws includes an end effector having a bore in which the gripping portion is freely removably seated.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented). The hand-held device of claim 18, wherein each of the gripping portions and bores are provided with complimentary male and female interlocking portions, whereby the gripping portions may each be securely freely removably seated in place within each of the bores.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented). The hand-held device of claim 19, wherein each gripping portion comprises an upper part having opposite gripping and seating surfaces, and a stem part extending axially from the upper part, the stem part including at least one radially extending tab, and wherein further each of the bores is dimensioned to receive therein the stem part, including the tab, each bore opening adjacent an upper surface opposing the seating surface of the gripping portion upper part, and each bore further communicating with a radiused slot dimensioned to receive therein the tab of the stem part to thereby permit rotational movement of the gripping portion relative to the jaw.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented). The hand-held device of claim 20, wherein the seating surface of each gripping portion includes at least one detent, and the upper surface of each of pair of jaws includes a complementary recess positioned at the limit of rotational movement of the gripping portion relative to the jaw.

Claim 22 (New). In a hand-held device for gripping an object positioned beyond arm's length, the device including at least a pair of jaws for gripping an object therebetween, the at least pair of jaws movable relative to each other between a fully opened position and a fully closed position, a handle spaced apart from said at least pair of jaws by a central portion, said handle having a manually-actuatable trigger connected to said at least pair of jaws by a linkage operative to move said at least pair of jaws from the fully open to the fully closed positions thereof upon actuation of the trigger, and a locking mechanism selectively operable to lock said trigger into at least a first locked position thereof, and in which at least first locked position the at least pair of jaws define a first partially-closed position between the fully opened and fully closed positions, the improvement comprising:

the linkage being a resilient linkage characterized in that the trigger can be moved into the at least first locked position thereof even when a gripped object prevents the at least pair of jaws from closing further towards the first partially closed position.

Claim 23 (New). The hand-held device of claim 22, wherein the resilient linkage comprises a resilient pull rod.

Claim 24 (New). The hand-held device of claim 23, wherein the resilient pull rod comprises a substantially inelastic pull rod including along the length thereof a resilient portion.

Claim 25 (New). The hand-held device of claim 24, wherein the resilient portion of the pull rod comprises a spring.

Claim 26 (New). The hand-held device of claim 25, wherein the pull rod is monolithic, and the spring is defined integrally therewith.

Claim 27 (New). The hand-held device of claim 22, wherein the locking mechanism is selectively operable to lock said trigger into any of a plurality of locked positions thereof, and in each of which locked positions the at least pair of jaws define one of a plurality of partially closed positions between the fully opened and fully closed positions, and wherein the improvement further comprises the resilient linkage being characterized in that the trigger can be moved into at least one of the plurality of locked positions thereof even when a gripped object prevents the at least pair of jaws from closing further towards at least one of the partially closed positions thereof.

Claim 28 (New). The hand-held device of claim 27, wherein the resilient linkage comprises a resilient pull rod.

Claim 29 (New). The hand-held device of claim 28, wherein the resilient pull rod comprises a substantially inelastic pull rod including along the length thereof a resilient portion.

Claim 30 (New). The hand-held device of claim 29, wherein the resilient portion of the pull rod comprises a spring.

Claim 31 (New). The hand-held device of claim 30, wherein the pull rod is monolithic, and the spring is defined integrally therewith.